



ELSAH HISTORY

Number Fifteen

Elsah History

April 1976

Elsah Remembers Aaron Darr

by Mrs. Mary L. Schmidt

Ed. Note: As far as we can determine now, Aaron Darr is the only citizen of the Village of Elsie ever to have been killed in combat while serving with the United States armed forces. While the final outcome of the war in Vietnam differs from the evaluation that Aaron's military citations projects, his character is consistent from childhood through military service, as Mrs. Schmidt's investigation shows. Her memoir shows not only that a small town can make a large contribution, but that it has sustained a significant loss.

In Fountain Square Park a memorial stone commemorates the participation in World War I of twenty-two citizens of Elsie Township. A second, smaller stone stands below it, and is dedicated to Aaron Darr, January 8, 1948-March 10, 1970, of the 25th Infantry Division, Vietnam.

The Village of Elsie presented this memorial stone to Mrs. Glenn Darr and her family.

Aaron Darr was killed when he was thirty-five miles south of Saigon, evacuating from a fire fight. The helicopter he was in crashed and caught fire.

In the Elsie Cemetery Aaron's grave is marked "CPL CO B 9th INF 25th INF DIV. RSM."

Mrs. Darr showed me her son Aaron's posthumously presented Bronze Star Medal and its accompanying citation for bravery.

"Aaron L. Darr distinguished himself by outstanding meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam during the period 11 December, 1969, to 12 March, 1970. Through his untiring efforts and professional ability, he consistently obtained outstanding results. He was quick to grasp the implications of new problems with which he was faced as a result of the ever changing situations inherent in a counterinsurgency operation and to find ways and means to solve those problems. The energetic application of his extensive knowledge has materially contributed to the United States mission to the Republic of Vietnam to assist that country in ridding itself of the communist threat to its freedom.

"His initiative, zeal, sound judgment and devotion to duty have been in the highest tradition of the United States Army and reflect credit on himself, his unit, and the military service."

A second medal, the Silver Star, was presented posthumously to Aaron for gallantry in action. This citation begins:

"Private Darr distinguished himself by heroic actions on March 10, 1970, while serving as a machine gunner, and while he was on a reconnaissance operation, elements of Company B came in contact with a large enemy force, sustaining several casualties. During the initial contact the Squadron Leader was wounded and Private Darr immediately took charge and skillfully placed the members of his Squadron in the necessary positions to place effective fire upon the enemy. Private Darr began to place devastating suppressive fire upon the enemy giving some of his comrades, who were crawling forward to aid the



Aaron Darr as an Elsie schoolboy

wounded, the covering they needed to accomplish their mission. After removal of the casualties from the danger area, Private Darr moved back with his Squadron and set up a defensive perimeter so that the wounded could be successfully removed by helicopter to the hospital.

"His valorous actions contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission and the saving of several lives."

The citation concludes:

"Private Darr's bravery, aggressiveness, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the 25th Infantry Division and the United States Army."

Aaron is also well remembered in Elsay, where he grew up and attended the village school.

"I always thought of Aaron as my brother," said Martha Riffner, "but then everybody liked him. He would walk home with the younger, smaller children, especially on dark nights. He took care of everybody. He made all of us at Elsay School and later at Jerseyville High

would walk home with the younger, smaller children, especially on dark nights. He took care of everybody. He made all of us at Elsay School and later at Jerseyville High School feel as if we were part of one big family. You see, Aaron had a way of dealing with bullies—they're the people who usually make difficulties, break things up, scare people. He wouldn't let anyone be mean to anyone else. He was a leader. That's what made him the head of our school family. And not only a leader. He could send the ball right into the walled-in area around the Methodist Church. That's a long distance from the Elsay School Playground. Another thing, Aaron was artistic as well as athletic. He did a good drawing of the Methodist Church in pencil."

Jim Robertson remembers Aaron as "Just the biggest kid around. Everyone liked and looked up to him. He was kind, tall, and thin. Great at sports."

Kent Hake recalls that Aaron was a fine, serious, different kind of boy. "Perhaps it's because he was the middle one of five brothers, Delby, Glenn, Aaron, Bill, Greg."

Jim Thompson, Jr., says, "Aaron got along with everybody and anybody. He was good-humored and humorous."

Aaron was a year older than his brother, Bill, who recalls, "I remember Aaron as a good organizer, always happy, without problems. He was athletic, well-liked, and a nice-looking boy. Aaron was twenty-one years old when he was sent to Vietnam."

Danny Cronin went to school with Aaron. He remembers Aaron as a friendly guy, a leader. "Everybody liked him."

Aaron's brother, Delby, now Elsay's mayor, recalls that his younger brother was a loner, independent, reliable, with a mind of his own. "He was the middle boy in our family of five boys. One thing he liked was playing American League Baseball at Jerseyville High School. From seven to eighteen years old he played in the Khoury League sports. Before he enlisted, Aaron worked for the Shell Oil refinery at Wood River. He was controlling the flow of oil through pipe lines into holding tanks."

The Aaron Darr Memorial Stone in Fountain Square Park



"Aaron was a peacemaker," recalls one of his teachers at Elsay School, Mrs. Dorothy Ross. "He knew what he wanted to do and did it. He was admired by everyone. He could hit a baseball from the school playing yard to within the wall of the Methodist Church. Aaron's team always won."

Mrs. June Cronin remembers that Aaron was a dark haired, nice looking boy. "He was well-liked by everyone and athletic."

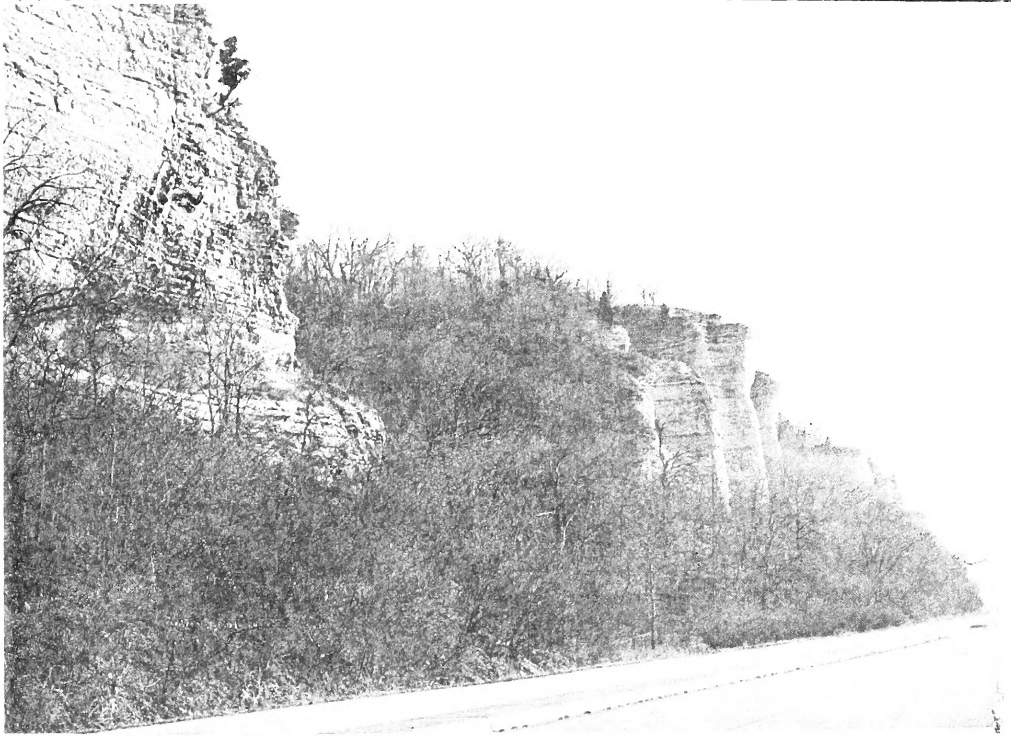
Mrs. Paul Barnes says that she was not surprised to hear that Aaron had courageously stepped into his Squadron Leader's position. "I believe that when he knew that he was going to Vietnam, he also knew what would be required of him. He was a fine boy," she added.

Mrs. Jesse Farmer adds, "There was a protective, responsive side to Aaron. He looked after all the children at Elsay School. Aaron helped Delby and his brothers to completely remodel their house, a weatherboard house, located on the hill behind Mr. and Mrs. Cronin's property. Another room was added to the house and they made a utility space in the basement."

Aaron Darr is not only remembered as a responsible young citizen of Elsay, but his immediate actions in Vietnam were fully acknowledged and bear the same testimony.

The battlefield found Aaron to be resourceful and courageous. It is in this same way that Elsay remembers him

Dennis McMurray, of the ALTON EVENING TELEGRAPH, writing in the 9 April 1976 issue (C-3) takes note of the work the Robertsons have done in restoring the Buggy Shop in Elsay and turning it into a home. He notes, "One of the Robertson sons, Jim, his wife, and their baby, live in the upper floor, which they have made into a cozy apartment which includes a brick log-burning fireplace, wood beam ceiling living room, an ample kitchen, bath and bedroom." The title of his article is "Turning eyesores into homes." We have never precisely felt that the Buggy Shop was an eyesore, though, of course, we are grateful for its restoration.



Eminence Hollow as seen from the River Road looking east

Eminence: Elsay's Brief Predecessor

by Joan Kilpatrick

Illinois frontier towns were rapidly developing in the late 1820's. One of them, known as "The Gateway to the Prairie," multiplied in both size and population to become Chicago, the third largest United States city. Another, also a proposed "gateway" town, vanished after a few years of obscure existence. It was known as Eminence.

Walking along the River Road or the Eliestoun Road on the Principia College campus, one can see the ravine which still retains the name of Eminence Hollow. It was here, according to the HISTORY OF GREENE AND JERSEY COUNTIES, in 1828, that Rev. Isaac Newton Piggott envisioned a town that would serve as a major supply depot for westward-moving pioneers.

Isaac, who was to be joined three years later by his brother, Dr. Joseph Piggott, began by establishing a post office, probably located at the top of the hollow, in order to serve both the future citizens of Eminence as well as the neighboring farmers. Remains of what is believed to be the cellar of the old post office stand a few yards south of the Eliestoun Road. In a recent dig on this site, two Principia students, Larry Whitmore and Cy Crandell, discovered assorted bottles and other debris various enough in age to indicate that this cellar was

later used as a garbage dump.

The reason for the sudden interest in developing this spot into a town was the rumor that the Cumberland Road, the great east-west national highway, might be passing directly through Eminence. In anticipation of wagons arriving which would need to cross the Mississippi River, Joseph Piggott began a hand ferry service in 1831. As it turned out, his fees were collected almost exclusively from local residents. (A typical rate for crossing the river was \$1.25 for a carriage drawn by four oxen.)¹

By 1831, Eminence, rather than St. Louis, was being discussed by Congress as a logical location for the national road. This was an apparent attempt to avoid a route which would cross the swampy "American Bottoms," a region in Illinois east of St. Louis which was subject to frequent flooding. In contrast, Commissioner Joseph Schriver reported in 1821, the area north of Alton was above flood level. The town of Portage des Sioux, on the Missouri shore, was noted for its immunity from flood waters, though it stood on a wide flood plain.

Eminence was also a preferred site because it was directly west of Vandalia, the state capital from 1820 to 1839, a city sure to be on the Cumberland Road. In A. B. Hulbert's book, CUM-

BERLAND ROAD, he states that \$10,000 had been appropriated by the Congress of 1820 to study and lay out the entire road.²

Despite the swampy regions and indirectness of the St. Louis route, the three commissioners in charge of inspecting the possible routes, Joseph Schriver, A. Lacock, and W. McKee, nonetheless preferred it. They explained in their report that "political and commercial considerations" required inclusion of St. Louis as the traveler's last vestige of civilization before he entered the wilderness.³

Constant disagreement over the site continued until general lack of interest in the project caused the discussion to taper off. In 1825, Schriver plotted two alternative routes from Vandalia to Jefferson City, Missouri, of which he favored the southern one through St. Louis. Stymied by the South's rejection of federal highway funding, the United States Congress never authorized the national road's construction beyond Vandalia. Its Illinois section was "only a partly cleared land filled with chuckholes and studded with stumps," according to THE NATIONAL ROAD, making it scarcely distinguishable from numerous other little country roads winding through the backwoods.

During this period of bickering and indecision, a man named Henry Mills, who had previously kept store across the river at Portage des Sioux, opened a general store at the foot of Eminence Hollow, on what is now the edge of the River Road. Obviously, Eminence was served by a road, but its exact location is still puzzled over today.

Joseph Piggott, together with John D. Gilham, also of Greene County, and Joseph Williams of Montgomery County, applied to the state legislature in January of 1829 in order to be appointed commissioners in charge of laying out a road from Eminence to Vandalia. But whether they did so in order actually to build a new road or just to receive official recognition for an existing one is not known.

As one begins to search the area, the many shortcomings of Eminence as a highway site become evident. For one thing, Eminence, unlike the Elsie site developed later, was situated in a narrow valley, leaving little room for expansion. Ridges and shoulders of land which might have been the foundations for a road disappointingly drop off or conceal shallow streams. Unlike Askew Creek, which runs through the Elsie Hollow, the stream in Eminence Hollow winds and switches around frequently, necessitating frequent bridges or fords.

Piggott, who had apparently ignored these faults, had founded other towns before Eminence. He was a key figure in the development of Zenith, Illinois. In fact, his earlier history was characterized by his potentially influential activities. For example, HISTORY OF GREENE AND JERSEY COUNTIES claims that Rev. Piggott, in his four-week circuits through the regions near Kane, was instrumental in establishing Methodism in that area.

Then, in 1822, he ran against Thomas Carlin in Greene County's first senatorial race. The close contest was climaxed by both men's receiving certificates of election. They were subsequently sent back to their district to do all their campaigning and handshaking over again in preparation for a second election. The final result was a clear victory for Carlin, who went on to become a governor of Illinois.

So by the time Isaac Piggott came to found Eminence, he was prepared to settle somewhere permanently. However he moved the post office to Newbern, a few miles east, in 1834, remaining as postmaster for awhile. And he lived to see his few neighbors, as well as any dreams of a thriving city, disappear. After two years in Eminence, his brother moved to Gilham's Mound in Mississippi Township, Jersey County, according to HISTORY OF GREENE AND JERSEY COUNTIES, to resume his medical practice and farming. The Greene County records state that Isaac remained at Eminence until he was sixty-six, at which time he moved to St. Louis, still retaining title to his Eminence property until his death in 1874.



Joseph Piggott's gravestone lies broken and almost inaccessible in the old Eminence graveyard, now in the woods between Eminence Hollow and Eliestown. Next to him is buried his wife, Anna, and his son, David.

At its height a village of only perhaps five houses, Eminence disintegrated, as so many of those first tiny settlements did, victims of poor planning and hopeless competition with St. Louis. Unlike its treatment of Chicago, fate was cruel to Eminence, which was swallowed up by the surrounding Ames and Turner estates. And today, the only people in Eminence are the occasional picnickers who find in the hollow a peaceful woodland with tall trees and limestone outcrops, and a narrow, wandering stream.

ENDNOTES:

1. HISTORY OF GREENE COUNTY, ILLINOIS: ITS PAST AND PRESENT (n.p.: Donelly, Gazette and Lloyd Publ., 1879), p. 258.

2. A. B. Hulbert, CUMBERLAND ROAD: HISTORIC HIGHWAYS OF AMERICA, Vol. 10 (1902; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1971), p. 73.

3. United States Senate, 28th Congress, 2nd Session, Doc. No. 41, SCHRIVER REPORT, Washington, D. C., January 3, 1821.

SOURCES:

HISTORY OF GREENE AND JERSEY COUNTIES. Springfield, Illinois: Continental Historical Company, 1885.

HISTORY OF GREENE COUNTY, ILLINOIS: ITS PAST AND PRESENT. n. p.: Donelly, Gazette and Lloyd Publishers, 1879.

Hulbert, A. B. CUMBERLAND ROAD: HISTORIC HIGHWAYS OF AMERICA, Vol. 10, n. p.: 1902; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1971.

Jordan, Philip D. THE NATIONAL ROAD. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1948.

LAWS OF ILLINOIS. 1828. n. p., 1829.

LAWS OF ILLINOIS. 1830. n. p., 1831.

Smith, Jene F., Chief, Social and Economic Branch, Office of Civil Archives, letter to Paul O. Williams, April 28, 1966.

United States House of Representatives, 28th Congress, 1st Session, Doc. No. 127, Memorial of the Legislature of Illinois Relative to the Continuation of the National Road from Vandalia to its Ultimate Destination, February 19, 1844.

United States Senate, 28th Congress, 2nd Session, Doc. No. 41, SCHRIVER REPORT, Washington, D. C., January 3, 1821.

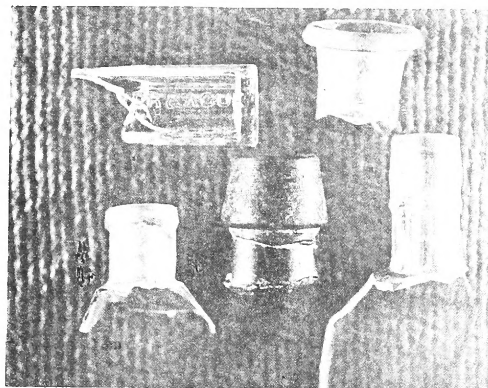
Whitmore, Larry and Cynthia Ware. THE EMINENCE RESEARCH. unpublished student paper, May 29, 1972.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

To Professors James Belote and Paul O. Williams for earlier research materials used.

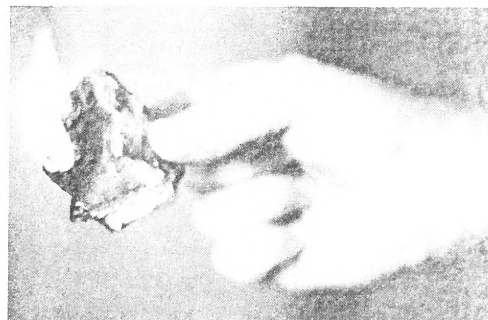
Doings in Elsah one hundred years ago this month as reported to the JERSEY COUNTY DEMOCRAT, 27 April 1876:

It was reported a few days ago that Arth Rumerfield, while pulling down an old cabin, on a piece of land he had recently purchased on the Piasa, found \$85 stuck away in the chinks of the logs. Old cabins are in demand ever since, everybody wants to tear one down, it aint really sic safe to live in an old cabin any more.



Bottle necks and fragments from the Eminence house site dig show applied lips (a 19th century style), but no definitely early materials were found, thus preventing the sure identification of the site as that of the Eminence post office. The small bottle fragment is for a cure for ague, or chills and fever, the common name for malaria.

local oil shale



Pictured here is some local oil shale, lit with a candle and burning on its own. This specimen came to Historic Elsah Foundation from Principia College geology student, John Hanson, who sent with it the following note:

"This oil shale is actually a type of lithographic (fine grained) limestone from an outcrop of Decorah Formation, Ordovician Age (430 million years old) rock near Batchtown, Illinois, on the Mississippi River.

"It might smoke slightly when burned. Normally, to retrieve 'oil' from shale, the rock must be heated to about 900 degrees F. This particular specimen is similar to those presently the subject of national controversy in Colorado."

We regret to report the passing of a long-time Elsah resident, Mrs. Katherine Spatz, of the Washington Manor Apartments, Alton. The Spatz family were longtime residents of Elsah. Among their many projects were the operation of a store in the present location of the Elsah Landing and of a filling station across the street in a small stone building designed by the architect, Bernard Maybeck.

Elsah's Bicentennial Oak

In our last issue we asked for information on any trees in Elsah which would have been alive at the time of the Declaration of Independence. It may well be that the oldest trees in the village limits may be some of the inauspicious junipers that grow on the rock outcrops of the bluffs. Some of these are extremely long lived, even though they may remain small. But the only way to tell their age is to cut them down and count the narrow rings.

However, we have found a tree that seems to fit our needs. It is a venerable white oak in the yard of Mr. and Mrs. Al Plagmann, just east of the Cemetery Road not far from the fork in the road at the north end of the village.

According to the Conservation Department, a minimum diameter for a two hundred year old white oak is thirty-three inches. This one has a diameter of fifty-seven inches a yard from the ground. It seems to qualify. With this in mind, the Board of Trustees of the Village of Elsah officially named the tree Elsah's bicentennial tree in their meeting of April 6th of this year.

At the time of the Declaration of Independence, of course, the small oak would have stood in a wooded valley that few would have visited but local Indians and perhaps a few trappers. By the end of the Revolution, it must have been gaining considerable size. It must have been a large tree when Jersey Landing was first used for shipping of farm produce in the 1840's, and been a noticeable tree when the roads of Elsah were laid out.

In the early 1880's, when the railroad was being constructed up through the hollow near the cemetery, the tree must have shaded the many mules that were used and stabled nearby. It must have shaken with the blasting of the abortive railroad tunnel started through the rock above it in the hollow.

Perhaps it was never cut down because it branches out so soon that the trunk would never have formed good saw logs. For whatever reason, we are grateful, because it gives Elsah an official bicentennial tree.

The editor recently had occasion to count the rings on the freshly cut stump of a black oak, of no great size, adjoining the site of the old Notch-cliff Estate of Mrs. Ames. To his surprise, the tree, no bigger than many in the area, was 115 years old. Thus it was an acorn in the early part of the Civil War. Now that doesn't seem so long ago.

fowl count

The 1975 Christmas bird census of the Audubon Society was again conducted in the Elsah area. Heading the count was Gilbert C. Ives. Participating were Suzanne and William Hagenlocher, Hannah and Richmond Haslam, David, Georgie, and Gilbert Ives, Josephine Miklas, Dorothy and Reinhart Ross, Alma Barnes, and Malcolm Bayley. The count included the following birds; 70 Canada geese, 612 canvasbacks, 32 American Golden-eye, 2 bufflehead, 4 red-tailed hawks, 4 bald eagles, 1 marsh hawk, 3 sparrow hawks, 1 coot, 47 ring-billed gulls, 8 rock doves, 115 mourning doves, 2 great horned owls, 5 barred owls, 2 belted kingfishers, 6 flickers, 2 pileated woodpeckers, 52 red-bellied woodpeckers, 83 red-headed woodpeckers, 6 yellow-bellied sapsuckers, 4 hairy woodpeckers, 24 downy woodpeckers, 101 blue jays, 20 eastern crows, 47 black-capped chickadees, 72 tufted titmice, 38 white-breasted nuthatches, 2 red-breasted nuthatches, 1 brown creeper, 1 winter wren, 13 Carolina wrens, 8 mockingbirds, 12 robins, 3 bluebirds, 2 golden-crowned kinglets, 5 ruby-crowned kinglets, 6 cedar waxwings, 183 starlings, 366 redstarts, 7 meadowlarks, 3 bronzed grackles, 177 cardinals, 70 goldfinches, 2 red-eyed towhees, 445 juncos, 20 tree sparrows, 35 white-crowned sparrows, 14 white-throated sparrows, 3 fox sparrows, 4 swamp sparrows, 7 song sparrows, and 8 evening grosbeaks. All these birds are winter residents.

We are grateful for the following contributions to HEF: from Bill and Thelma Van Vleck, \$5; Laura Hance, \$10; Mrs. Clarence Davenport, \$1; Annabelle Woodard, \$6; Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm B. MacIntire, \$5; Mr. and Mrs. Edwin N. Park, \$5; Mrs. Dorothy Holt, \$3; and Rachel Crist, \$40. Thank you all very much.

The Elsah Bicentennial Oak



temperance sentiments

Well, Nolia the idea
of you sitting up &
drinking beer with a
man

Don't tell any one you
are from Elsie

No west for me at that
rate. Tell Mr. Graves
it would take a better
man than he is to
get us to drink with him
He will have to get over
that if he comes to Elsie
Snow water is enough
for any man

O. Yes Meg Seagraves
has a girl
How is that?

Through the good offices of Mrs. Harold Schio-
baum of Godfrey, Illinois, a large collection of early
20th century letters written by the Milfords and Mc-
Nairs of Elsie has come to light for research. Above
is a page of a letter from Nan Milford, whose family
lived in the Mack house on Palm Street, to Magnolia,
or Nolia, McNair, her sister, who was at the Colum-
bia Mine, Sumpter, Oregon, with her husband, Tom
McNair. He was working there for a time. A running
commentary on Mr. Graves, about whom Nan Milford
expressed humorous interest, as a unmarried girl
in her twenties, appears in the letters. Here her
Methodist and W. C. T. U. sympathies come out,
though. The passage was written December 2, 1906.
Tom and Nolia McNair were the parents of Beulah
Carpenter, whose passing was reported in our last
newsletter.

A new deck has just been put on the footbridge in Foun-
tain Square by a volunteer work crew under the direction
of Elsie Mayor, Delby Darr. It is of two inch treated oak
and will be left its natural color.

A volunteer work crew of Principia College students
has cleaned the lot on Mill Street opposite the Methodist
Recreation Hall. For the first time in many years this
lot is neat and presentable, and we are grateful for
their work.



Despite our current drought, this has been a very good
year for spring wildflowers in Elsie. One of the lesser
known, but very showy, flowers of the woods is the large-
flowered bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*) with its yellow
flowers with hanging, twisted petals.

Elsie's Woman J. P.

In response to publicity surrounding the 1907 elec-
tion of a woman, Mrs. Catherine Waugh McCulloch, to
the office of Justice of the Peace in Evanston, Illinois,
the JERSEY COUNTY DEMOCRAT countered Mrs. Mc-
Culloch's election publicity in an article entitled,
"Jersey County Always Ahead," in the May 9, 1907
edition (p. 10).

Because Jersey County had the first lady Justice of
the Peace elected in the State of Illinois, the DEMOCRAT
wanted it "distinctly understood" that Mrs. McCulloch
was "not the only pebble on the beach."

Mrs. Amelia Hobbs was elected Justice of the Peace
in Jersey County in 1871, due mainly to the fact that
Elsie's Captain Starr, though elected, was not quali-
fied to hold his office.

Though disqualified once, Captain Starr ran again
the next year and, the DEMOCRAT reported, "more as
a joke than any thing else," several (?) male Elsie citi-
zens voted for Mrs. Hobbs and against Captain Starr,
"and she was elected by a good majority."

The only problem with Mrs. Hobbs' election was that
when the question of her ability to qualify arose, the At-
torney General of the State of Illinois looked for a law
"which authorized him to issue a certificate of election
to a woman to act as Justice of the Peace" and found none.
"Thus was Mrs. Hobbs eueched out of the office." Was
Jersey County really always ahead?

HISTORIC ELSAH FOUNDATION NEWS

house tour

HEF is holding its annual house tour on Mother's Day, May 9th, from 12:30 P.M. until 5:30 P.M. Tickets are \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children under twelve. Babies in arms and toddlers are free.

There will be seven homes open, both churches, the Village Hall, the Civic Center, and the Doll Museum.

Mr. and Mrs. Ned Bradley are opening their Village Inn again, much to the delight of those who admire their charming, even museumlike, restoration of that 1850's vintage brick home.

Mrs. Grayson is opening her brick cottage, always a favorite for its interesting furnishings and hominess.

Mr. and Mrs. Les Sontag are opening their home on Mill Street. This stone house was built originally for Louis Keller in the later 1850's. The Keller family lived in it for many years, adding a mansard roof and a rear portion in 1892. Mr. Keller was a cooper, and built barrels in a shed at the rear of the property. One humorous newspaper account tells of his being out in the woods gathering hoop poles for the barrels and his family, fearing he was lost, setting out after him. Mr. Keller remarked in the next week's column that he didn't see why a citizen couldn't gather hoop poles without its being reported to the papers.

Restoration of the house in recent years has been done in several stages. Mrs. Ruth Lyman's work in restoration was crucial in saving the house. Its last owners, the

Forbes Robertson family, also worked to preserve and update the house. The present owners stress that the house will be under further restoration at the time it is on view.

On Valley Street the Musselman House will be on view. This was an ordinary white frame house until the building of Principia College brought Edward Hussey to Elsay as supervisor of construction. He modified this Elsay house into a half-timbered structure, adding a bathroom halfway up the stairs and so easily accessible from either floor. He also built a truly unique garage, the roof of which is gunite sprayed on a framework of old car bodies and chicken wire. The garage doors are hinged obliquely so that they always fall shut unless hooked open.

The present occupants, the Tom Robertsons, are short time residents, and so have not brought many furnishings, but Mrs. Christine Robertson is a professional photographer. She will display some of her work for the tour.

The Margaret McCandless House on Valley Street will be open as well. Built by Walter Cresswell in 1928 for his mother, this small frame home is charmingly furnished.

One of the largest rock houses in Elsay, Piasa Lodge, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rockabrand, will also be on view. Built in the late 1850's, and for many years the home of Clement J. Ward, a carpenter and cider-maker, the house was recently restored by Mrs. Margaret Singletary. The Rockabrand's have furnished it with antiques.

The McNair-Hosmer House, opposite Fountain Square Park, is another recent restoration. From its construction in the late 1850's until past 1900 this was the home of various members of the McNair family, one of the most colorful in Elsay. It is now beautifully restored and features not only the family's antiques but an unusual stair-hall painted in Elsay scenes by artist Glenn Felch.

At the Civic Center there will be a bake sale, as well as a sale of miniatures and hand crafts. Rest room facilities are also available there.

The Village Hall will open for an art sale and a sale of china painting and hand woven items.

At both the Civic Center and Village Hall tickets may be bought. HEF publications will also be on sale there.

The Doll Museum will not have its usual collection, but rather one of miniatures.

Members and friends wishing to help on the house tour may contact Inge Mack at 466-4242 for information on jobs that need to be done. We are hoping to make this the smoothest and most satisfying house tour yet.

publications

HEF has a small supply of publications that frequently come into demand. Below is a listing of available materials:

ELSAH HISTORY: Numbers 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 12 are available at 25 cents each, plus 15 cents postage, if it is needed.

Leaflets: #1 THE MAYBECK PILOT at 25 cents, plus 15 cents postage.

#2 ELSAH CITIZENS at 50 cents, plus 20 cents postage.

#3 ELSAH BLUFF PRAIRIES, by Marilyn Bland, at 75 cents, plus 20 cents postage.

#4 THE GREAT RIVER: MASTER SCULPTOR, by Percival Robertson, at \$1.50, postpaid.

#5 CHAUTAUQUA, ILLINOIS, A BRIEF HISTORY, by William Fabian, at \$2, postpaid.

ELSAH: A HISTORIC GUIDEBOOK, 3rd edition, at \$3, postpaid.

Other items: Postcards of Riverview House, with the old road entrance, at 10 cents each, plus postage, unless sent with other items.

Sylvester souvenir, showing a full-color reproduction of a F. O. Sylvester riverscape with information inside, at 25 cents, plus 10 cents postage.

The HEF Christmas Party was held in the Village Hall last December 19th. The hall was beautifully decorated by Mr. and Mrs. Ned Bradley and helpers. As before HEF supplied turkey and rolls, and families brought pot luck dishes. Mr. James Crafton MC-ed a short entertainment session following the dinner. HEF is grateful for the generous efforts of many people in bringing the party together, and especially to Mrs. Inge Mack for heading up the project.

DON'T FORGET. CONTRIBUTIONS TO HISTORIC ELSAH FOUNDATION ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE NOW.